



Top 10 Job Search Blog Posts

At LinkedIn, we believe everyone has the right to find their dream job.
Here are the top 10 LinkedIn blog posts on landing a career opportunity you'll love.



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5 Easy Ways to Win Recruiters' Hearts and Minds

By Abby Kohut



Abby Kohut

Abby Kohut, also known as "Absolutely Abby," is a recruiter who has hired over 10,000 people. Her website, speeches, and books teach job seekers secrets about the job search process that other recruiters won't tell you. Abby is currently on a nationwide tour fulfilling her mission of helping one million job seekers find a job. Learn more about at www.AbblyAcrossAmerica.com.

Like many of you, I decided to join LinkedIn because of peer pressure. In 2005, I received so many invitations from friends that one day, I finally decided to take the plunge. Unbeknownst to me, this was the best decision I could have made as a recruiter, and it is the best decision you have made as a job seeker.

There are 200 million LinkedIn members (and growing), but this doesn't mean there are 200 million expert members looking for jobs. Here are 5 ways to stand out from the crowd and win the hearts, minds, and attention of top recruiters.

1. Be 'highly searchable' for busy recruiters

Back in 1997, I rode the NYC subway with a pile of faxed and mailed in resumes in my hand every Monday evening. I would screen them one by one, hoping to find the perfect candidates to show my hiring managers on Tuesday morning.

Keywords barely mattered back then. Today, they are practically the only thing that does matter. Why? Because recruiters start by running searches for candidates, and they can only find you by the skills you've listed. Being concise is good, but not at the expense of completeness.

You can find the appropriate keywords from job descriptions that you apply for. Make sure you mention them. Some repetition is fine, even helpful – especially if multiple positions have involved similar skills and duties – but remember that a human will be reading your profile at some point. Avoid obvious 'keyword stuffing', as it will undermine your credibility. Here is an example of how to incorporate words artfully:

"Developed PowerPoint presentations for the Board of Directors"
"Responsible for creating PowerPoint decks"

Even if you're not job searching now, many recruiters build a 'pipeline' of future candidates, and it's good career sense to be on the radar of as many recruiters as possible.

2. Give them a consistent picture, across your LinkedIn profile and resume

Your LinkedIn profile will more than likely be viewed, reviewed, and compared with your resume. Don't get tripped up by creating confusion or mistrust in a recruiter's busy mind.

Here's a simple rule: Be sure that the *titles* and *dates* match. If they don't, you may fail to meet expectations on the core requirement of integrity. Recruiters hate having to withdraw offers from candidates when everyone in the company has fallen in love with them.

It's true that many job search experts encourage job seekers to create different versions of their resumes. If you opt for that strategy, ensure the basic facts are consistent. Adding emphasis on certain roles, or certain dimensions of your skillset, can be totally appropriate, but be transparent. For example, if you have a title that doesn't match the standard titles in your industry or your actual responsibilities, add an explanation in parentheses. For example:

Vice President, Marketing (Acting in Marketing Manager role)
Director of Finance (independent contributor)
Office Manager (also responsible for Human Resources)

3. Remember the personal touch

In the same way that you would not go up to a stranger and ask them to hold your hand without having gotten to know you first, one of my pet peeves is when people send LinkedIn invitations without personalizing them. In other words, just because some of us are open networkers, doesn't mean that we don't want to know how you learned about us. Customize your invitation when you ask people to join your network. Include how they know you, how you can help them by being a part of their network, and/or how you hope to work with them in the future.

On LinkedIn, if you have fewer than 50 connections, you simply need to find more. A large network gives you visibility of more profiles (up to your 3rd degree with a Premium subscription). Therefore, you'll have a greater chance of seeing the name of the hiring manager or recruiter at a company you're interested in. You probably have more potential connections than you think – try listing out all the people you knew at your former companies, your bowling team friends, and your college classmates.

4. Lead with your LinkedIn identity

As mentioned in #2, you should expect a recruiter will try to research you on LinkedIn. Make it easy! Neglecting to include the link to your LinkedIn Profile on the top of your resume could lead to mistaken identity. For example, if your name is Steve Smith, there are hundreds of your namesakes who live within 50 miles of New York City. A link on the top of your profile will send the recruiter straight to not only your background information but also to your endorsements, recommendations, honors and awards which can send you straight to the top of the pile.

When you sign up for LinkedIn, you are automatically assigned a Public Profile link for just this purpose. The default link includes your name plus a set of randomly generated numbers by the system, for example, www.linkedin.com/pub/steve-smith/5/8a/4a0. The Public Profile [can be edited quite easily](#) to just include your name instead of a bunch of numbers, and it will be much more appealing to a recruiter. If your name is popular, such as Steve Smith, you may have to be more creative as there are many of you out there. You can try adding relevant acronyms or adjectives, such as: www.linkedin.com/in/SteveSmithNJ or www.linkedin.com/in/SteveSmithCPA for example.

5. Look work-ready in your LinkedIn profile picture

While having an unprofessional or inappropriate picture won't necessarily put you in the "no" pile, it may leave a recruiter concerned about sharing your resume with a hiring manager. A professional photo will give the impression that you are a serious candidate worth evaluating, and [your LinkedIn profile is 7 times more likely to be viewed if you have a photo](#).

Let's start with a fundamental point that's often overlooked: your LinkedIn picture should be of you, not a picture of your family or your dog. Also be sure to represent yourself professionally. Avoid posting pictures where you are staring up into the sky, looking like you're having a bad day, or clearly in a non-working mode. For example, the picture of you dressed up like Spongebob on Halloween is best saved for other social media sites.

A picture is only worth a thousand words if it is high-quality, so consider getting your headshots done at a major retail chain for a low cost. Or, get help from a family member or friend: use a high-resolution camera, and select a neutral background with indirect lighting. Remember to smile! Your picture should exude confidence.

Finally, dress for success. Imagine it's the first day in your new role, and you're ready to walk through the door. Note this could be different if you're walking into an office, a plant, a store, or some other work environment.

How to Showcase Your Personal Brand on LinkedIn: 8 Tips

By Lindsey Pollak



Lindsey Pollak

Lindsey Pollak is a LinkedIn Ambassador and an internationally recognized expert on next generation career and workplace trends. She hosts the "LinkedIn Job Search Fundamentals" webinars for LinkedIn and is the bestselling author of *Getting from College to Career: Your Essential Guide to Succeeding in the Real World*.

Like professional athletes, we now live in a time of career free agency, where we must regularly prove our unique value in a competitive and frequently changing marketplace. This means that it's no longer enough to have a good reputation in one's current position. We need to think about how we're perceived in the broader marketplace by potential future employers.

Even if you intend to stay in your current job forever, clarifying your unique value is something you need to attend to. Clients, conference planners, awards committees and other professionals may be checking you out — primarily online — and you want to make sure that they find the best representation of you.

We're talking about personal branding, a key element of success in the Internet Age.

A term first [coined by Tom Peters in 1997](#), personal branding includes your professional reputation, online image and personal characteristics such as your work style, community engagement and worldview. It incorporates the particular skills, talents and areas of expertise you've cultivated. When I host workshops on personal branding, I ask participants the following questions to help determine the elements of their personal brands:

- How would your colleagues describe your strengths?
- On what issues are you the go-to person in your organization?
- What do you know more about (web design, compensation plans, marketing to baby boomers) than most people?

Once you've defined your personal brand, it's time to showcase it to recruiters, bosses, customers and others who may be assessing you. Here's how LinkedIn can help:

1. Be authentic

The best personal brands are genuine and honest both in person and online. It can be tricky to showcase your personality on the web (you might love puns, but those don't go over well on a professional profile), but it's possible with a bit of effort.

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For instance, if your personal brand includes a balance between your detailed accounting skills and your friendly personality, your LinkedIn profile can include both your technical credentials and the fact that you belong to several networking groups. You can also ask former and current colleagues to write LinkedIn recommendations highlighting this combination.

2. **Create a distinctive LinkedIn profile headline**

Your headline is your brand's tag line. It's the first — and possibly only — description of you that many people will see, so make it count. Go back to the words and phrases your friends and colleagues used to describe your uniqueness: "IT support manager and trusted Mac expert" or "Experienced admin assistant who never misses a deadline."

3. **Be consistent**

Make sure your LinkedIn profile, resume and all other elements of your personal brand are consistent. While you can go into more extensive detail on LinkedIn and perhaps be a bit more personal on Facebook or Twitter, all of your job titles, dates of employment and specific accomplishments need to match up everywhere they appear. Consistency is important so as not to confuse people or send mixed messages about who you are and what you want in your career.

4. **Increase your visibility**

If you have a great personal brand but no one knows about it, then you won't benefit much. Increase your exposure to people in your network by including your LinkedIn profile URL on your business cards, your resume, other social media sites and anyplace else people are interacting with you online or offline. You can also build exposure by consistently updating your LinkedIn status. Tell people what projects you're working on, what conferences you're attending and what books and articles you're reading. Remember that your brand is not just who you are; it's what you do.

5. **Build your strategic brand association**

We generally think highly of people who keep good company, so building your LinkedIn network simultaneously builds your personal brand. Connect on LinkedIn with trusted friends, former colleagues and classmates, industry leaders, vendors and other professionals. And don't be shy about asking your contacts for introductions to people in their networks. Strong brands are always growing.

6. Regularly add to your knowledge

Another way to showcase yourself and your brand is to have an expert level of knowledge about your industry. Be well read on topics you care about (For example, [LinkedIn Today](#) can help), answer relevant questions in [LinkedIn's Answers](#) section and follow important companies in your field. For instance, if your personal brand includes your interest and knowledge in special education, follow and share news about developments in this field so people think of you as a valuable resource if they need information on that topic.

7. Share your expertise in LinkedIn Groups

The Groups you join on LinkedIn contribute to your personal brand by indicating where your interests and skills lie. For example, if you want your brand to include a strong knowledge of manufacturing in China, then people will expect your profile to feature groups related to Chinese manufacturing. Inside these groups, you can also showcase your brand through your activity. Every comment you post and question you answer is an opportunity to market yourself and your skills and to build your brand.

8. Give generously

Finally, helping others is a crucial — and enjoyable — way to build your personal brand. Give advice, volunteer your skills, share client leads, write recommendations, agree to informational interviews and congratulate people on their successes. When people know they can rely on you, they remember you and recommend you to others.

How to Launch a Successful Job Search in a New City

By Jodi Glickman



Jodi Glickman

Jodi Glickman is an expert in teaching young people how to be great on the job. She is the founder of www.greatonthejob.com and author of the best-selling book: *Great on the Job: What to Say, How to Say It, the Secrets of Getting Ahead*. She is a regular contributor to the Harvard Business Review and a national media expert on all things career related.

Finding a job in today's market is daunting enough, even with friends and family cheering you on. But moving cross-country and looking for a job at the same time—it's enough to throw any sane person over the edge. Launching a job search in a new city is undoubtedly harder than finding a new gig in your hometown, but today you've got more resources to help make the transition smooth, seamless and successful. Here are 8 things to keep in mind as you load up your VW, board that plane, or head for the other coast...

1. Know Why You're Moving

Ask yourself the tough (or obvious) questions and be straight with yourself. Are you making a lifestyle choice, (Boulder anyone?) moving to be close to friends and family, or making a career change? Any of these factors will likely impact your job prospects and earning power post-move. Whatever the case, be honest with yourself about the reality of the situation and adjust your expectations accordingly.

2. Get to Know Your City

Start reading the local papers online and find some niche blogs that speak to you. Research the business drivers in your new city—is your destination a high tech zone, like Silicon Valley; a booming college-town like Austin, Texas or a burgeoning start-up community like Chicago? How robust is the local economy? Are you moving to Bismark, ND ([3.8% unemployment](#)) or Detroit ([10.8% unemployment](#))? Take into account the strength of the local economy as you factor in how long your job search will actually take.

3. Tell the World you're Moving!

Update your LinkedIn profile with your headline—"moving to Minneapolis—looking for a new job in consumer products." Post your new status on Google+, Twitter, Facebook—and any other social networking sites you use. Send personal messages to your LinkedIn [connections](#) and let people know you're coming to town. A cross-country move is a great excuse to reach out to former colleagues or classmates and ask for assistance with introductions, informational interviews, or job leads.

4. Leverage Your Network

It's time to leverage your network and start building new relationships. Use [LinkedIn Groups](#) to find like-minded job seekers or networking groups in your new city. The [Groups Directory](#) page will give you suggestions of groups to join or allow you to search by keyword or category. And don't underestimate the power of your [alumni network](#). My Cornell alumni page on LinkedIn is a treasure trove of information—it gives me an incredible dashboard that tells me where fellow alumni live, who they work for (by industry) and what they do. In a single snapshot, I can tell who is working in business development in the San Francisco Bay Area and presto—I've got my target list of people to reach out to to find a biz dev job in that city.

For the more adventurous who want to take networking offline, consider joining an in-person MeetUp group. The Portland Job Seekers Group, for example, hosts regular networking and recruiting events around town.

5. Ask for Help

Once you've tapped into your network, old and new, go ahead and take the plunge—ask for the help you need. People relish being the expert on their city and enjoy helping friends and acquaintances find their footing in a new locale. Ask your friends, friends of friends, friends' parents—who they know who can help your cause. Be as specific as possible in your requests for help. Do you want contacts in digital media and entertainment or are you looking for informational interviews with consumer products professionals in Cincinnati?

I recently spoke to Micah Brenner, a job seeker who's moving to Chicago from New York City. Micah relies extensively on both her alumni network and LinkedIn community—asking her growing network for help with everything from putting her in touch with local headhunters, making introductions to contacts at financial services firms, even recommending pre-schools for her toddler.

6. Make the Job Search Work for You

There's absolutely too much information out there to sift through. Instead, make your job search work for you by using the advanced search function in [LinkedIn Jobs](#) and searching jobs by keyword, zip code, date posted and more, so that you only see the most relevant and interesting jobs. You'll also have the ability to see who you're connected to at respective employers, giving you a great leg up to learn more about a specific company or position. You can also create saved searches and email alerts when new jobs are posted that meet your criteria. For even more help creating a personalized job search tool, check out Lindsey Pollak's recent post on [curating your own personal job search feed](#), which gives you great tips on setting up personalized job search alerts from all of your favorite job search sites.

7. **Expect to Fail** (a little bit....)
Don't get discouraged if you don't find a job immediately. There are bound to be bumps and bruises along the way, so plan for hiccups. Stay busy. Job search in coffee shops so that you're not home alone feeling blue. Get a part-time job or volunteer to get to know people and become engaged in your new community. Whatever you're hoping to accomplish, assume it will take longer than expected.
8. **Pay it Forward**
Finally, reach out and thank all of those who helped you along the way. Close the loop and let people know how things turned out. And of course, think about how you can return the favor and pay it forward. Who can you help with a job search or write a LinkedIn recommendation for? How can you give back to your new (or old) community? Keep your good fortune in mind the next time someone asks you for a job lead or think about what you can do to help a friend who's recently been laid off.

How to Network with VIPs on LinkedIn

By Lindsey Pollak



Lindsey Pollak

Lindsey Pollak is a LinkedIn Ambassador and an internationally recognized expert on next generation career and workplace trends. She hosts the "LinkedIn Job Search Fundamentals" webinars for LinkedIn and is the bestselling author of *Getting from College to Career: Your Essential Guide to Succeeding in the Real World*.

One of the first pieces of advice I always give to job seekers is to network with the people you already know – friends, family, neighbors, former colleagues and fellow college alumni. These people are valuable members of your LinkedIn network and, ideally, will be happy to introduce you to potentially helpful contacts in their LinkedIn networks.

However, there are some instances where you'll want to reach out to people who are not at all connected to your existing network and are, in your estimation, Very Important People. Your VIPs may include recruiters, hiring managers, senior executives at prospective employers or "stars" in your industry.

If you're ready to network several rungs up the career ladder, here are some tips:

1. Ensure that your profile makes a great first impression

VIPs are busy people, so if they receive a LinkedIn message from you and decide to check out your LinkedIn profile, chances are they'll only spend a few seconds reviewing it. This means your profile has to be stellar. First, craft a profile headline that is very specific and sells your skills and uniqueness, such as "Deadline-driven copywriter with 10+ years of experience at top-tier ad agencies." Next, make sure your profile is 100% complete so a potential employer can quickly understand your education, experience and key skills. Finally, quadruple check your profile for typos, grammar mistakes or "red flags" such as outdated certifications or unexplained gaps in your experience.

2. Do your research on each VIP

Before reaching out to anyone, but particularly to a VIP, thoroughly review the person's LinkedIn profile. Take note of anything you have in common with this person, any recent changes in his or her employment or any recent status updates that might give you something to mention in your outreach. Doing your homework will increase your confidence and will ensure that you don't make any big mistakes (such as asking the person what it's like to work at a company he just left).

3. Write a “must-open” InMail subject line

If you have no connections in common with this VIP (and, therefore, cannot ask for an introduction from someone in your network), you will need to reach out by using an InMail credit (part of the [Job Seeker Premium account upgrade](#)). Since the VIP will not recognize your name, you must write a subject line that compels the person to open your message. Here are a few suggestions:

- Mention something you have in common, such as an alma mater, hometown, professional association membership or personal interest. For instance, if you recently attended the same event as the person, you might write, “Question from fellow attendee of recent lumber expo in Chicago.”
- Offer information. If after reading a VIP’s LinkedIn profile you come across an article the person might want to read or an event the person might want to attend, this information could be the key to connecting. For instance, your subject line might read, “Thought you might enjoy this article on special education in Africa.” (Just be sure it’s not a commonly known article or that the person hasn’t shared it on her own LinkedIn status!)
- Answer a specific request. If the VIP is a recruiter or executive who has specifically mentioned a job opening, then be clear that you are responding to that opportunity. For example, “Candidate for sales manager position you mentioned on WXXX radio this morning.” In this case, there’s no need to beat around the bush!

4. Write a concise, specific and polite message

A big mistake people make when reaching out to network with VIPs is writing too long of an outreach message or being too vague. Remember that this is neither a cover letter nor your life story. You must be straightforward about who you are and what you are asking this person. And you must always show respect for the person’s time. Here is an example:

Subject line: Request from fellow Detroit native inspired by your TED talk

Dear John,

I recently viewed your TED talk online and, as someone who grew up in Detroit, I was particularly inspired by your story of success as a journalist. I am currently transitioning from a teaching career into journalism and I was wondering if you could offer any advice or resources specifically related to launching a career in digital journalism. I know you are very busy, so any guidance or suggestions would be deeply appreciated – a particular niche you recommend I pursue, blogs I should read regularly or even a news outlet that you might know is hiring in the Detroit area. Thank you for inspiring me and for considering my request.

*Best regards,
Lindsey*

5. **If at first you don't succeed, try another way**

If you don't receive a response to your InMail when you reach out to a VIP, don't despair (and remember that the InMail credit will be replaced if you don't receive a response). But I also recommend that you don't follow up using the exact same method. To reach a busy VIP who may receive hundreds of emails and messages a day, try something different, such as commenting on a group discussion this person has posted, replying to a status update this person has shared (You can follow people you share Groups with on LinkedIn by clicking "follow" under that person's photo) or even reaching out to another person at his or her organization to make a good impression and then ask for a referral to the VIP.

Finally, remember to show your gratitude. If you are successful making contact with a VIP and that person offers you an informational interview or answers a few questions by email, don't forget to send a gracious thank you message on LinkedIn. Even though VIPs are busy, they will always appreciate (and expect) a polite and timely thank you note. Good luck!

Find Your Next Gig: Tips for Freelancers and Contractors

By Jodi Glickman



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Jodi Glickman is an expert in teaching young people how to be great on the job. She is the founder of www.greatonthejob.com and author of the best-selling book: *Great on the Job: What to Say, How to Say It, the Secrets of Getting Ahead*. She is a regular contributor to the Harvard Business Review and a national media expert on all things career related.

Are you one of the [44 million Americans](#) who make your living as a solopreneur or independent contractor? Perhaps you're considering taking the leap, leaving corporate America and striking out on your own (the independent workforce is projected to grow by 40% to [65 million in 2020](#)). If you're a freelancer, you know how important it is to get gigs and maintain a healthy backlog of new clients and prospects.

Here are three tips that will help you land that next project or assignment and keep the business coming...

1. Show Your Stuff

Make sure your LinkedIn profile is up-to-date and complete with all of your relevant skills and experiences. Think of your profile as your first stop for personal branding and marketing. Keep SEO in mind and use keywords as you update your profile. Make sure to include phrases like "freelance journalist" or "independent contractor and graphic designer" in your summary, headline and tags. You also want to be easily searchable based on your key skills and desired client base, so include those skills that drive your revenue stream or business, i.e. public speaker, corporate trainer, six-sigma consultant, etc.

Think of it as marketing 101 and be sure to include your value proposition to potential clients as well — what kind of results do you regularly achieve for clients? Go ahead and boast a bit — your bio should draw potential clients in and make people want to hire you.

And of course, a picture is worth 1000 words — if you work in the visual arts, take advantage of the [Behance Creative Portfolio Display](#) app. [Matthew Kalish](#), an advertising and production freelancer, uses this app to show off his creations right alongside his profile. It's easier than ever before to share your artistic genius with the world. For those in creative and non-creative industries — you can show your stuff with LinkedIn's new [SlideShare](#) app — upload your recent PowerPoint presentations to give others an idea of the great work you do.

2. Get Others to Vouch for You

Get recommendations! People want to know that you're great at what you do. I'm much more likely to hire you when I see that six other people are singing your praises and love working with you. Haven't stock piled any? Start writing recommendations for others and in exchange, ask friends, colleagues or former clients to reciprocate.

And don't worry — it's never too late to ask. Even if you transitioned off a team or stopped working with an organization months or even years ago, it's okay to reach out, reconnect on LinkedIn and ask for a recommendation. If it has been a long time, consider providing some guidance on what you'd like that recommendation to say. It never hurts to help jog someone's memory about the great work you did for him or her in the past.

3. Network, Network, Network

Most freelancers live by referrals. Your network is your most important asset. [Halee Sage](#), a project manager and early childhood expert says word of mouth referrals are her best friend. She keeps in regular contact with her network and always reaches out to former clients when she's between jobs to let people know she's looking for work. She also sells her skills, not just her experience. "You want to demonstrate that your skill set is broad and can meet all of a clients needs," says Halee.

Freelance journalist [Anita Bruzzese](#) uses her LinkedIn network to find editors to approach with story lines or pitches. She researches their backgrounds and finds mutual connections so that she can get a warm introduction via LinkedIn, which typically yields a much better response rate.

But it's not just one-on-one networking that's important. Joining groups can be just as effective. Check out the hundreds of [LinkedIn Groups for Freelancers](#) – there are groups for writers, graphic designers, software developers, virtual assistants—you name it. Find your affinity group and get involved. You can join group discussions, find job postings, and make invaluable connections that will lead to new business leads down the line.

At the end of the day, building and maintaining a strong freelance business boils down to building relationships, marketing yourself regularly and using your extended network to source opportunities. Stay in touch with former clients, classmates and colleagues, don't be afraid to highlight your skills and talents and ask others to vouch for you. Opportunity is more likely to come knocking at your door when you proactively set yourself up for success.

LinkedIn Profile Tips for Non-traditional Careers

By Lindsey Pollak



Lindsey Pollak

Lindsey Pollak is a LinkedIn Ambassador and an internationally recognized expert on next generation career and workplace trends. She hosts the "LinkedIn Job Search Fundamentals" webinars for LinkedIn and is the bestselling author of *Getting from College to Career: Your Essential Guide to Succeeding in the Real World*.

Due to the realities of the economy and employment market today, it's increasingly common to moonlight outside of work hours, start a small business on the side, consult for a variety of clients or, as *The New York Times* recently [reported](#), work five or six part-time jobs simultaneously to pay the rent.

There are pros and cons to every situation, of course, and many people prefer to earn a living without a full-time, steady job. But there's one area where "non-traditional" employment can pose a particular challenge: when creating a professional social media profile.

Here are three common non-traditional employment scenarios and recommendations for how to portray them in the most positive way on LinkedIn. As you'll see, in most cases you have several options depending on your unique circumstances and preferences:

1. You are working more than one job

Whether you're moonlighting outside of work hours, juggling two part-time jobs or developing two completely different careers at the same time (e.g., you're an accountant who also teaches yoga), it can be challenging to design a profile that includes both situations.

Your first decision is whether you want to feature both careers on your LinkedIn profile. If you think it might be puzzling or even damaging to one of your jobs to feature both on your profile, then simply leave off your other employment. There is no rule that you have to show *everything* you do on LinkedIn.

If, on the other hand, you want to promote both of your jobs or careers, here are two ways to do that effectively:

- Embrace the slash mark: [Marci Alboher](#), author of *One Person/Multiple Careers*, coined the term "slash careerist" or "slasher" to refer to individuals who can't answer "What do you do?" with a single word or phrase. If you're perfectly comfortable being a tech salesperson/photographer or a lawyer/SAT tutor, then proudly display this as your LinkedIn headline.

LinkedIn Profile Tips for Non-traditional Careers

You'll also want to list both of these positions as your Current Employment in your profile. The way to include more than one job as current is to put the end dates of both jobs as "present." Note that whichever role began more recently will be displayed first.

- If, instead, you want to highlight one of your jobs more prominently (e.g., because you're hoping to land a new job in that field or believe you'll have more networking opportunities related to that role), then I recommend writing a profile headline featuring that role exclusively and listing it as your only current position.

You can then mention your other work in your Summary statement. For example: "John has been working for the past seven years as a public relations executive in the pharmaceutical industry, where he has served such clients as X, Y and Z. In addition to his passion for PR, John is also an avid sailor and teaches private and small group sailing lessons as well (for more information, visit www.JohnTeachesSailing.com).

2. You've been working for yourself and now you want a full-time job

If you're currently a business owner, consultant or freelancer but want to transition to full-time employment, your best bet is to indicate this clearly on your LinkedIn profile. If you don't, most people will assume that you're happy in your self-employment.

Here are some ways to explain your goal:

- Declare your intentions in your LinkedIn headline. For instance, "Freelance writer open to full-time writing and editing opportunities."
- Stay positive in your Summary statement. Especially if you don't want to alienate your current clients or make it seem as though you feel that self-employment was a mistake. Be upbeat in describing your situation. For instance, "For the past five years, Jane has used her design and branding expertise for a variety of clients and is now eager to apply her skills to a fulltime position at an advertising or branding agency."
- Request recommendations from people who can highlight your skills in teamwork or professionals who have managed you in a fulltime employment situation. This shows that you're not a renegade entrepreneur who will leave fulltime work as soon as you have another business idea.

3. You've been out of the workforce for several years and want to get back in the game

Whether you were out of the workforce raising children, caring for a sick relative, traveling, unemployed or otherwise engaged, a big gap in your LinkedIn profile might raise a red flag with employers so you need to address it directly. Again, you have several options:

- Include "open to opportunities" or "seeking employment" along with your desired position or industry in your LinkedIn profile headline. For example, "Administrative assistant with 10 years of experience seeking new position." Then, in your Summary statement, explain without apologizing that you have been out of the workforce for X number of years for X reason and you are eager to get back to contributing your skills to a company. Keep your explanation nice and short and then focus on the skills you possess that can benefit an employer. If you've done any work while you were out of the workforce, absolutely include this as experience — volunteer work, freelancing, temping, helping out in a family business, etc.
- List any certifications, coursework or skills that you developed before you left the workforce or, especially, while you were away. If you feel your skills are rusty, then it might be a good idea to sign up for a training class and include that information in your LinkedIn profile as well.
- Join LinkedIn groups related to the industry you want to join or re-join and become active in them. This will show how serious you are about networking professionally and resuming your place as an industry insider.

In general, be honest, be positive and be proactive about explaining your current situation and/or what situation you desire in the future. Then test your LinkedIn profile with a few trusted professionals to make sure it reads well and portrays you in the very best light. Good luck!

Why Volunteering is Good for Your Career

By Nicole Williams



Nicole Williams

Nicole is a bestselling author and LinkedIn Career Expert who helps professionals understand how to enhance their careers using the LinkedIn network. Her company, WORKS by Nicole Williams, is a go-to resource for career-minded young women and was named one of Forbes magazine's Top 10 Career Websites for Women.

Millions of professionals donate their time volunteering that impacts the lives of others, but it turns out volunteering is as good for your career as it is to those you help. Here's how:

1. Helping Others Matters

All that time you spent raising record amounts of money, the year-end event you planned to perfection all felt like real work and...it was. New research from LinkedIn shows that one out of every five hiring managers in the U.S. agree they have hired a candidate because of their volunteer work experience. Your volunteer experience counts and if you don't include it in your profile, on your resume or when you're negotiating for a promotion you're not getting the credit you deserve.

2. Test-Drive Your Passion

A truism of career success is that passion correlates with talent and talent translates to reward (both financial and emotional). One of the safest ways of test-driving your passion as a career is to volunteer your talents. Not only do you get to try your hand at a repertoire of new skills and experiences in a low-risk forum, but you'll also be showcasing these talents to a whole host of peers who may just happen to have the connections you need to get hired.

3. You Never Know Who You're Going to Meet

The majority of career enhancing opportunities come through relationships and volunteering exposes you to people you wouldn't encounter otherwise. And get this: volunteer relationships are particularly beneficial since many of the folks you interact with while volunteering are usually driven, conscientious professionals who can be a great referral. Volunteering offers a whole new world of qualified and valuable connections.

Why Volunteering is Good for Your Career

4. **Get Noticed / Motivated**

The most successful people in the world dedicate their efforts to a cause that extends beyond themselves and your boss and / or hiring manager are well aware of this. In this hypercompetitive world of work, volunteering not only provides you the opportunity to showcase your talents and experiences, but it also allows you to demonstrate compassion and commitment.

5. **Add the new “Volunteer Experience & Causes” field to your LinkedIn Profile now**

In the new “Volunteer Experience & Causes” field, LinkedIn members can add volunteer positions, causes they care about, and organizations they support. This ranges from Big Brothers Big Sisters, and DonorsChoose.org, to American Red Cross, or Teach for America.

The Best Way to Network with Alumni on LinkedIn

By Lindsey Pollak



Lindsey Pollak

Lindsey Pollak is a LinkedIn Ambassador and an internationally recognized expert on next generation career and workplace trends. She hosts the "LinkedIn Job Search Fundamentals" webinars for LinkedIn and is the bestselling author of *Getting from College to Career: Your Essential Guide to Succeeding in the Real World*.

If you've been feeling the urge lately to buy fresh pencils and open the first page of a crisp new notebook, you're not alone. Whether you graduated two years ago or 20, September always feels like the beginning of a new school year.

For job seekers, this sense of a new beginning can inspire you to inject new energy into your hunt. In particular, the fall season is a nice time of year to reconnect with members of your college or university alumni community, who may be feeling nostalgic for their school days as well (particularly if you have a good football team!).

Here are some tips for connecting and reconnecting with fellow graduates of your alma mater:

1. Join your alumni community

The first essential step is to become a member of your university's alumni group on LinkedIn. Virtually every college and university in the world has one or more, as do many high schools as well. Go to the [Groups Directory](#) and search for the name of any educational institutions you attended. You'll find that some schools have multiple groups, so join as many as appeal to you.

Once you're a member, scan the group's Discussions, Members and Jobs for networking opportunities. For instance, join a discussion of fellow alums talking about your industry, comment on an article someone has posted or introduce yourself to the Group Manager, who is often a representative of the Alumni Association (often a very connected and helpful person).

You can also start your own discussion, perhaps posting an article with a few personal comments or posing a question to group members. Or, you can introduce yourself and your goals: "Hi fellow Tigers: I'm new to the group and excited to connect with fellow alums. I'm currently looking for a job as a graphic designer and eager to connect with any other job seekers or design folks. Happy to help anyone I can. Thanks!"

The Best Way to Network with Alumni on LinkedIn

Remember also that LinkedIn permits you to send a message or connection request to anyone with whom you share a group on LinkedIn (as long as that person has opted to accept such messages), which will help you build one-on-one relationships with individual group members.

2. Tap the LinkedIn Alumni tool

Your next stop should be [LinkedIn Alumni](#), a tool that provides you with information about where your fellow alums work, what they do and where they live. The tool pre-fills the years you attended a school listed on your LinkedIn profile and shows you the classmates who attended at the same time. For a broader search, you can enter additional graduation years.

You can look at the big picture of where people work and live, then you can narrow the results according to your goals. Let's say you are looking for a job in public relations at a university or nonprofit organization in the Chicago area. The tool helps you narrow your vast alumni network to those who live in Chicago and work in public relations. Then, you can scan the list of "Where they work" and find the universities and nonprofits where your fellow alums are employed. LinkedIn Alumni will then show you the exact profiles of the alums who fit all of your criteria. Considering a move to Milwaukee? Just start a new search and click on that region under "Where they live" and all of the data will change to show you fellow alumni in that geographic region instead. If you attended more than one university, you can use the "change school" feature at the top of the page to explore other colleges and universities.

3. Reach Out (the Right Way)

Once you've identified some alums in your desired field and location, it's time to make contact. While there are no guarantees, fellow alums are more likely to reply to a networking request than random strangers because you share a common experience. Here is how I would approach an outreach message:

Hi Sonya,

I'm a fellow ABC University alum and came across your profile. I graduated in 2003, also with a degree in History, and have been working in the PR industry for the past few years. I'm currently job hunting and hoping to make the transition from the agency side into a role at a nonprofit or university. I really admire your career and was wondering if you might be willing to offer some advice or perhaps chat by phone? I would really appreciate your time and would be happy to do anything I can to help you.

Thank you and Go Tigers!
Lindsey

The Best Way to Network with Alumni on LinkedIn

Note that the message immediately mentions the alumni connection, is polite and professional and shows that you've done your research on the other person (signifying that you're not just sending out generic blast messages). You never want to sound desperate and you never want to ask directly for a job or to send a resume. The goal here, as with any good networking message, is to establish rapport and ask for general information and advice.

How to Make A Career Switch

By Jodi Glickman



Jodi Glickman

Jodi Glickman is an expert in teaching young people how to be great on the job. She is the founder of www.greatonthejob.com and author of the best-selling book: Great on the Job: What to Say, How to Say It, the Secrets of Getting Ahead. She is a regular contributor to the Harvard Business Review and a national media expert on all things career related.

Conventional wisdom says that an average worker has between 7 and 10 careers in a lifetime. For the Millennial generation, that number is even higher. Today's workforce is mobile, global, and tech savvy. With opportunities literally at our fingertips, it's easier (and more acceptable) than ever to try one's hand in a new field. If you've been thinking about a career change, here are 8 tips to get started:

First, ask yourself three key questions:

- 1. Why are you making a switch?**
Are you bored or not challenged? Itching to be part of the start-up, high tech revolution? Do you need to move to a more lucrative field? Whether you're looking for more job satisfaction, a bigger paycheck, a more collaborative work environment, or a chance to put your natural talents and skills to use, you've got to know what's driving you and then tailor your job search to meet your needs. When Suzanne, a close friend, reached her limit as a corporate accountant, she was determined to put her interpersonal skills to use. As she began to look for new jobs, she focused on organizations and roles that would emphasize and value her communication and leadership skills above all else, and thankfully ended up at a non-profit that did just that.
- 2. What do you need to do to break into your new field?**
Do you need to go back to school to get there? Does it require an advanced degree (Ph.D., MBA, MFA, etc.)? Are internships or apprenticeships a pre-requisite? If you're headed to media or entertainment, you likely need to start in the mailroom or as a production assistant. If journalism is your thing, blogging and/or freelancing are great ways to start. Finance will likely require an advanced degree while high fashion is all about scoring the right internship. A great way to learn about what the pathway to success looks like in your desired field is to network within [LinkedIn Groups](#) and search for 2nd and 3rd degree connections to ask for informational interviews.

3. What are your transferrable skills and how will they help you?

Chances are you've acquired some marketable, transferrable skills along the way. What do you do well? Coding, graphic design, project management, creative writing? We've all got natural talents and abilities—think about how to put yours to use in your desired field. What skills will help you manage relationships with teammates, clients, customers or your boss and help you become a great sales rep, councilwoman or entrepreneur? What skills are most valued and how do your natural talents jive with what's needed to excel in your new field? Look at the profiles of people who have the positions you want and check out their [skills](#)—do yours match up?

Next, get organized

4. Educate Yourself!

Follow industry trends on [LinkedIn Today](#) and sign up for Smart Brief newsletters to get smart about what you need to know in real estate, aerospace or advertising. If you have specific companies you're interested in, follow them on [LinkedIn](#) and set up [Google alerts](#) for up-to-date news on key transactions or key players in the business. Join or follow your industry's key professional associations (and if you don't know which ones to join, check out [Groups You May Like](#)). You'll need to be able to speak with confidence and insight about your new industry so that people take you seriously and want to help you pave your way into their field.

5. Create a set of short-term and long-term goals

A career transition can take anywhere from months to years. Create a plan with near and long-term goals and strategies to map out your course of action. I recently spoke with [Jessi Walter](#), a former investment banker who dreamed of opening up her own cooking school for kids. She longed to start her own business and become an entrepreneur, but the thought of leaving the corporate world (and a steady paycheck) behind was terrifying. Jessi decided to take baby steps. She enrolled in an [incubator class](#) for women entrepreneurs to bounce around ideas and then reached out to former classmates and friends for brainstorming and fundraising advice. She scoured her network to find legal advice for small business owners and secure her first location. She gave herself a timeline of 18 months to get her ducks in a row before leaving her corporate gig. Today, she is up and running with a staff of thirteen at [Taste Buds](#) Kitchen, a state-of-the-art test kitchen for kids.

6. Market Yourself

Update your LinkedIn profile to indicate your interest in your desired field. Make sure your Opportunity Preferences are set to welcome career opportunities. Tell everyone you know—family, friends and acquaintances—that you’re transitioning into a new field so they can help your cause. And make sure you’ve got your [personal pitch](#) ready in your back pocket so that you can easily explain your professional journey to others – where you’re heading and why, where you’ve been, and how the two are connected (i.e. why this career move makes perfect sense).

Work Your Network

7. Who do you know?

Explore and expand your network. Reconnect with classmates using LinkedIn Alumni. Ask friends, classmates, or former colleagues about job openings in your desired field. Do an [Advanced People Search](#) filtered by industry. Can your connections share expertise, introduce you to others or sit down with you for informational interviews? Ask key questions about how people broke into the field—what helped them become successful and what skills do they think are most valuable to new professionals in their industry today.

8. Reach Out

Finally, stay on top of industry trends, news and events so that you’ve got a great reason to reach out to potential employers, friends or colleagues in your new industry. Congratulate others on job moves or promotions, offer to help someone breaking into the field you’re leaving, and do your best to reciprocate for help you receive in your own career switch. Reaching out is a two-way street—the more you do for others, the more you’ll receive in terms of help moving forward on your own career path.

LinkedIn Tips for Over-50 Job Seekers

By Lindsey Pollak



Lindsey Pollak

Lindsey Pollak is a LinkedIn Ambassador and an internationally recognized expert on next generation career and workplace trends. She hosts the "LinkedIn Job Search Fundamentals" webinars for LinkedIn and is the bestselling author of *Getting from College to Career: Your Essential Guide to Succeeding in the Real World*.

While conducting a recent [LinkedIn webinar](#) for job seekers, I was struck by the number of questions we received on the subject of job hunting over the age of 50. Fear not, Baby Boomers. There are many ways LinkedIn can be particularly useful for job seekers with extensive resumes. Here are some tips:

1. Sharpen Your Skills

While those who've been in the workforce for many years have built up many valuable skills, you need to make sure those skills are still in demand. If they're not, you may have to update your proficiencies. [Marcy Alboher](#), vice president of [Encore.org](#), an organization that helps people transition to jobs in the nonprofit and public sectors, says, "Are your skills up to snuff for the kinds of positions you're interested in? If not, spend the time and invest in yourself. In today's environment, you could easily be working another twenty years so it's a worthwhile investment that you can amortize over time." If you're not sure how relevant your skills are, check out the skill requirements listed in the LinkedIn job postings for the positions you want. You can also search for and view the profiles of LinkedIn members who have those exact positions to see what skills those people mention on their profiles. If you have certifications or licenses that you know are in demand, feature these prominently on your profile. Make sure you use current terminology in describing your skills as well. To give a well-known example, "secretarial skills" has been replaced by "administrative assistance." Find out what the dated terms are in your line of work and find their contemporary counterparts.

2. Emphasize Your Passion

If you're concerned that employers may perceive you as overqualified for the jobs you want, you can draw attention away from a long work history on your LinkedIn profile. You can do this by choosing to list only the last 15 to 20 years of your work experience and / or not including the year you graduated from college. Use your Headline and Summary statement — often the first elements of a profile that people read — to display your passion for your work or your excitement about recent developments in your industry.

3. Show Your Tech Savvy

No matter what job or industry you're hoping to enter, technology will most likely be part of the job. Fortunately, you can use your LinkedIn profile to show potential employers that you are comfortable with current technology. (Simply by having a LinkedIn profile you're already demonstrating a level of savvy about social media!) When it comes to being tech savvy, remember that this phrase also refers to the way technology has sped up the pace of business. Respond quickly to any LinkedIn connection requests or messages you receive to show that you can operate on "Internet time."

4. Network Across Generations

Many high-level jobs are found through personal connections rather than job postings, so networking is absolutely essential for highly experienced job seekers. Just remember to network beyond your peer group and form connections with people of all generations and experience levels. One great way to do this is through involvement with your university's alumni community. Whether you graduated last year, last decade or last century, you'll always share a bond with people who attended your alma mater. Check out [LinkedIn Alumni](#), where you can quickly search your entire alumni community by employer, industry and geographic location. Then, reach out to alums of every age who work in your field and ask to have a quick chat about your career interests. Most people will be happy to speak with you and may know of opportunities at their organizations. And, with your level of wisdom and experience, you'll surely be able to offer them valuable knowledge or connections in return.



To get our latest job search tips, please visit
our blog: <http://blog.linkedin.com/topic/jobseeker/>

